

STAFFORD COUNTY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
JUNE 4, 2009

Call to Order. A regular meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission was called to order by Anita Dodd, at 3:12 P.M., Thursday, June 4, 2009 in Conference Room ABC, Stafford County Administration Center.

Roll Call. The following members were present: Anita Dodd, Chairperson; Barbara Kirby, Vice Chairperson, Ann Best-Rolls and Jane Conner. Cessie Howell arrived at 4:15 P.M. Scott Kelley and Frank White were absent.

Also in attendance were: Kathy Baker, Assistant Director, Planning & Zoning; Brenda Schulte, Principal Planner, Planning & Zoning; Terry Baxley Morton, Commission Clerk.

Presentations by the Public. No one desired to speak.

Item 1. Approve Minutes of Commission Meeting. Barbara Kirby motioned, seconded by Jane Conner to approve the May 7, 2009 Commission meeting minutes with corrections.

The Voting Commission Tally was:

Yea: (4) Best-Rolls, Conner, Dodd, Kirby
Nay: (0)
Absent: (3) Howell, Kelley, White

Item 2. Continue Revising the Requirements for a Permit for Demolition of Structures to Present to the Director of Public Works formerly Code Administration. Kathy Baker explained the demolition permit process. The applicant receives the demolition permit; it is then forwarded to a zoning technician. Currently, an applicant can receive a permit for demolition the day of remittance. Kathy Baker discussed the process with Keith Dayton, Director of Public Works. Kathy Baker said it would be an attempt to follow a policy. The request would not legally be mandated.

Anita Dodd iterated the main objection from applicants would most likely be the delay incurred by a new policy. She said if a new policy could be implemented it would surpass the current policy. Anita Dodd inquired with Kathy Baker regarding the criteria Keith Dayton requested. Basically, he requests a timeframe and requested that it be no longer than 30 days.

The Commission agreed 30 days would be a reasonable timeframe to request the owner to allow the Commission to photograph and record the structure before demolition. The Commission decided any structure older than 50 years would be a reasonable request.

Anita Dodd said 50 years is understandable, she would like it to be fewer years. She said the streetscape would change every ten years. She said even though people consider certain

structures to have no historical significance it still records how the County's use of space changes and how the County should look and work. In that case, it would only require a photograph. She suggested perhaps taking photographs of structures prior to the time of demolition.

Jane Conner mentioned Laura Lacey, head of Brooke Point High School History Club, seeks projects eligible for her student's participation. She said it would be a nice opportunity for students to get experience and exposure to cultural resources in the County.

Discussion ensued.

Barbara Kirby motioned, seconded by Jane Conner to approve the process for demolition permits as submitted by staff.

The Voting Commission Tally was:

Yea: (4) Best-Rolls, Conner, Dodd, Kirby

Nay: (0)

Absent: (3) Howell, Kelley, White

It was iterated that citizens may legally photograph structures from public right-of-way. Obviously, without the actual structure, record of the structure becomes the next most important item. Anita Dodd said the only way to make people aware of the importance of certain structures is through education. She suggested possibly speaking to homeowner associations (HOAs) about the cultural resources in their neighborhoods, what to look for, how to take care of them and what they are. Many times people have no idea why something is saved. Education would bring awareness to them and hopefully, the awareness would grow. She has spoken to HOAs a couple of times in the past.

Item 3. Confirm the Revision of the Phase IA and Phase I Portions of Proposed Ordinance O06-47 dated July 18, 2006 to Present to the Board of Supervisors Regarding Archaeological Surveys and Investigations. It was decided to remove one word from the beginning where it describes identifying significant structures before a phase I. Other changes only had to do with sequencing (numbering). This ordinance should provide a procedure for developers to follow regarding cultural resources to be done early on. The developer would be informed at the beginning of the process so they can work the site plan around it. It is the Commission's hope that the ordinance would make things easier for staff and developers. Anita Dodd said a phase I study can sometimes lead to a phase II depending on what was found. If a phase II study confirms that it is a significant site in addition, in addition, it is eligible for the National Register, then mitigation starts, how we can work with it, save it. If mitigation fails, a phase III study, a complete archeological investigation, is conducted. Barbara Kirby suggested each Commission member work with their Board member on awareness of this ordinance. Anita Dodd said it is imperative for the entire Commission to be present if the ordinance goes before the Board. She said many people do not understand the importance of cultural resources. She said the Commission needs to continue with the procedure. The Commission discussed how there are variations in the companies that are chosen to conduct these studies. Currently, there is no control. She said if you have a report on file you at least have something to start with. She said when researching

something you use several different resources to learn all you can. Anita Dodd said archeologists refer to local historians as one of their resources, not exclusively, but one of a few.

Anita Dodd suggested adding the White Oak Museum to the list of resources for the County, Commission or agent to refer to for a phase I study.

Kathy Baker read aloud proposed section 28-39 part 2-g, "And information procured from other primary and secondary sources, for example, journals, newspapers, other historic maps not mentioned, and oral history".

Anita Dodd said that section could include local historians as well.

The Commission decided to table the subject.

Cessie Howell arrived at 4:15 P.M.

In summary: Anita Dodd iterated that the studies mentioned are not the only research conducted on cultural resources. Research includes different types of resources.

The County agent first determines if a phase I study should be conducted by looking at certain databases and documents. They look at different kinds of resources to make the determination. The ordinance lists the type of resources that are to be used in Section 28-39 - Special regulations – part 2-g. She reread proposed section 28-39 part 2-g and reiterated that part 2-g could include local historians.

Cessie Howell was concerned about different archeology firms not getting the exact same information.

Anita Dodd said to think the report has to be perfect, is not achievable. To hold the ordinance back with that being the main concern, you are losing so much more than if you just forgot to add something to a report. Having said that they want to make every effort possible to make sure that they record everything that might be impacted by development.

Anita Dodd said a phase I is conducted in order to find concentration of artifacts.

Discussion ensued in reference to a letter written May 21, 2009 by, Local Historian, D.P. Newton regarding archeological surveys in the County. The Commission decided to invite D.P. Newton to the next meeting.

Cessie Howell motioned seconded by Ann Best-Rolls to add local historians to the list of type of resources in Proposed Ordinance O06-47, Section 28-39 Special Regulations, Part 2-g.

The Voting Commission Tally was:

Yea: (4) Best-Rolls, Dodd, Howell, Kirby

Nay: (0)
Absent: (3) Conner, Kelley, White

Report of the Chairperson. Anita Dodd commented on the following:

- Monitoring Report from the Robertson-Towson House – Weekly report of stress on the house from installation of pipeline in the area. Stress indicators were placed on the corners of the house and the chimney. The pipeline required blasting. No stress occurred.
- A nursing home is to be constructed on Berea Church Road next to England Run. A Civil War trench was identified through an archeological study. There are no accompanying sites with the trench. The trench is located in the middle of the site. The developer is unwilling to provide a sign for the trench.

Cessie Howell said she would follow-up on the request for signage.

Brenda Schulte said the developer is willing to provide a site for signage.

- Barbara Kirby and Anita Dodd attended a meeting with staff from the Silver Companies regarding a web-site called StaffordHistory.com. They said it is very impressive, however, it is in its infancy. The site has much potential. People will be able to obtain lesson plans and cultural resources management reports among other items. Eventually the site will include the entire County not only the Celebrate Virginia area.
- The Sanford Farm that was originally in the Celebrate VA area has been sold to the Utilities Department of the County. The County will need the property for access to the Rocky Pen Run Reservoir. The site contains the remains of the Sanford house, which are extremely deteriorated, the Sanford Cemetery and an African American log house. The Silver Companies desires to work toward preservation of this area. The County's Utilities Department is aware of the area and is interested in assuring the proper procedures are followed concerning cultural resources. Anita Dodd expressed to the Utilities Department that the Historical Commission be abreast and included in any decisions regarding the area.
- The Accokeek Creek Civil War Site Plan Committee held no meetings.

Discussion ensued.

Adjournment. At 4:53 P.M., the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned.

Anita Dodd – Chairperson

Barbara Kirby – Vice Chairperson